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Champion
17 January 2018 Vol 25 • Issue 3 www.champnews.com

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School rated 'inadequate' to become Academy

Care home plan for pub site set for approval

Pilot in Parbold field crash 'hopped' aircraft to avoid fence

A PILOT who crash-landed a plane in a field near Parbold on August 28 last year "hopped" the aircraft over a fence to avoid hitting it, states a report released by the Air Accident Investigation Board.

The light aircraft, a Piper PA-28-140 Cherokee, was forced to land after losing power at around 2,300ft. It crash-landed on a field before hitting a sheep which ran into its path.

The plane was on a training flight, and two practice engine failures had been carried out within 15 minutes of it leaving Liverpool Airport. Then, while climbing at around 2,300 ft a genuine engine failure happened and its power suddenly reduced.

The 53-year-old instructor, who had nearly 1,000 hours flying experience, took control to attempt to glide the plane to a safe landing. He made a distress call and selected a suitable field to land.

Damage

The propeller continued to 'windmill' until the aircraft was flared for landing.

After touchdown the instructor spotted a low fence ahead and briefly lifted the aircraft off the ground again and "hopped" over the fence.

During the subsequent ground roll several sheep ran in front of the aircraft and one was hit, causing the damage to the plane.

The aircraft was stopped close to a second fence and the electrics and fuel were then turned off before both crew members exited through the door.

Some unidentified debris was later found in the carburettor but the examining engineer was unsure if this was sufficient to have caused the engine failure.

RENEWED CALL FOR IMPROVED PARKING OFFER FOR TOWN

Councillor says 'hard-pressed' traders are still waiting for promised scheme five months later

Report by **Kenny Parker**

A LONG-serving councillor is calling on West Lancs Council to make good on its promise to introduce a better parking offer for Ormskirk to help "hard-pressed" retailers in the town.

Councillor Adrian Owens, Derby ward representative for the Our West Lancashire independent group, says that when his party's proposal for a new parking offer was rejected in July, council bosses said an alternative scheme would be in place by September.

But five months later he says they are still waiting for the plans to materialise.

However a spokesperson for the council said parking charges were currently being reviewed for a report to be "presented to councillors shortly."

Cllr. Owens said: "Labour made a promise at last July's council meeting to bring forward new proposals for Ormskirk's car parks by September, yet still we are waiting.

"The post-Christmas period is probably the hardest time of the year for retailers and yet there is still no sign of the long-promised plans. They weren't on the agenda for this month's cabinet meeting."

Cllr. Owens said that revisions to parking arrangements in other towns had helped to boost visitor numbers. He claimed Oldham Council's offer of three hours free parking on Saturdays had resulted in an increase in usage of 22%, while Bolton's free weekend car parking saw the number of visits increasing from 85,000 to 205,000.

He added that Rochdale and Chorley councils had both also introduced three hours of free parking daily.

Our West Lancashire had proposed a 12-month trial of car parking concessions to reduce parking charges or extend free parking after full consultation with the town's retailers.

Councillors Ian Davis and Adrian Owens at Wheatsheaf Walk car park

Cllr. Owens claimed this could have been funded with £80,000 from the current year's financial under-spend but said this had been rejected by the ruling Labour group who promised to unveil their own scheme.

Continued inside

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New interim chief executive takes up post at county council

Report by **Henry James**

A NEW interim chief executive and director of resources has taken up her post at Lancashire County Council.

Angie Ridgwell has joined the authority from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy where she was director general for Finance and Corporate Services.

A qualified accountant by profession, Ms Ridgwell's work has focused on improving public services. She has worked in a wide range of public sector bodies and local authorities, principally as chief executive or director of finance, including posts at Bristol City Council, Thurrock Council, Coventry City Council and Bridgnorth District Council.

Ms Ridgwell has also worked in consultancy and as an associate with KPMG. Assignments included Northamptonshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and as executive director at the London Development Agency, advising the board and Mayor of London on regeneration and economic development strategies.

In her latter career, Ms Ridgwell has focused on transformation situations, most recently overseeing the merger of two Government departments to form BEIS.

Angie Ridgwell the new interim chief executive and director of resources at Lancashire County Council.

She said: "I am very proud to have joined Lancashire County Council. Lancashire has so much potential. It has a really strong cultural heritage and was the home of the industrial revolution.

"There are lots of innovations happening right now in the county and I am really enthusiastic about supporting these, in particular ensuring we are providing the best services possible to those most in need and encouraging business development."

Expertise

Speaking of her new role she added: "The council, like local authorities across the country, is facing some significant challenges. But I am confident that county council members and staff, with their expertise, passion and commitment, will rise to this challenge, ensuring that we as a council are delivering the best possible service to the people of Lancashire at the best possible cost."

Council leader, County Councillor Geoff Driver, said: "Angie is joining us at a crucial time for the county council when we face unprecedented service and financial challenges. I am confident that her skills as a visionary leader and her experience of managing the finances of major organisations will see us through these difficult times. I look forward to working with her."

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School to become an Academy after Ofsted report 'inadequate' rating

Report by **Kenny Parker**

'Disappointed' head says: "We accept the issues raised . . . we are fully committed to providing the best education we can for our pupils"

A WEST Lancashire high school is to be converted into an academy after Government watchdog inspectors graded it as 'inadequate'.

A letter to parents of pupils attending Burscough Priory Science College in Trevor Road said that following the highly critical Ofsted inspection report, the school was being placed in special measures.

That was then followed by a second letter informing them that the Regional Schools Commissioner had ordered that the school be converted into an academy once a sponsor has been found.

Academies are centrally-funded and run independently of local authority control. Approximately two thirds of secondary schools in England are academies, though only about 30% of those are sponsored. Sponsored academies are under-performing schools which the Government appoints a sponsor to run.

The Ofsted report on Burscough Priory graded the school as 'inadequate' overall and specfically in four areas - effectiveness of leadership and management; quality of teaching, learning and assessment; personal development, behaviour and welfare; and outcomes for pupils.

Among the failings observed at the school, which caters for 700 pupils aged 11 to 16 were that senior leaders do not provide effective strategic leadership and do not systematically monitor the quality of what happens in the school; too many pupils do not benefit from routinely good teaching, which has a detrimental effect on the progress that they make; and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve.

An area of particular concern for the inspectors was the school's treatment of disadvantaged pupils. These are described as those who attract Government 'pupil premium funding'; have received free school meals at any time in the last six years; or have come from a background in care.

The inspectors said that disadvantaged pupils who attend the school "do not get a good deal".

Of the 19 students who had been excluded from school last term, which the report said was a high number, 10 were 'disadvantaged'.

Improvements

The previous Ofsted inspection in 2012 resulted in the school being graded 'good' overall.

Positive comments in the latest report included 'the care and wellbeing of pupils is a high priority for leaders'; 'pupils are generally polite and friendly and behave well during breaks and lunchtimes'; and 'some of the most able pupils attain good GCSE grades across a wide range of subjects'.

Headteacher, Graham Clarke, said: "Although we are disappointed with our latest Ofsted report, we accept the issues raised by the inspectors' findings and, with the support of the local authority, have already started to make improvements where they are needed.

"The report did contain some praise including the high priority given to the care and wellbeing of our pupils and the achievement made by some pupils in their GCSE's across a wide range of subjects. The inspectors also noticed the good behaviour of our pupils, and their politeness and friendliness.

"We are developing a long-term improvement action plan with clear time scales to address the issues that have been identified. Progress is already being made to make sure that improvements happen both effectively and quickly, on those areas where we can do better. These include increasing leadership across the school and raising attainment, by improving the consistency of both teaching and students' work.

"We will work closely with the county council on those areas where we can improve. Staff are very positive about the need to address the issues that Ofsted identified to raise achievement for all.

"Parents are being kept fully informed and I'd like to reassure them that we are fully committed to providing the best education we can for our pupils."

Burscough Priory Science College

Call for better parking offer

From Page 1

A spokesperson for West Lancashire Borough Council said: "The council is reviewing its car parking charges in discussion with local businesses and this will form the basis of a report that will be presented to councillors shortly.

"There is a £1.9m budget gap facing the council next year in terms of the difference between the spending required to maintain agreed service levels and the resources that are expected to be available.

"Efficiency savings, additional income and other measures have already been agreed to address this position, which will reduce the budget gap to around £1m.

"The council will meet on February 28 to set its budget for 2018-19 and this will include consideration of a number of issues including the use of under-spends and reserves to achieve a balanced budget position."

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Christmas crackers!

Council chiefs praise borough employees for their efforts over festive period

WEST Lancs Council chiefs have praised employees for their efforts over the Christmas and New Year period to provide vital services to local people.

For example, the council's Home Care Link Service has been supporting its 6,500 vulnerable customers over the festive break, continuing to provide an excellent service 24 hours a day.

The service aims to promote independence so clients can stay in their own homes.

They are given a call button which is linked to the council's monitoring centre through their telephone landline. When the alarm is raised highly-skilled Home Care Link operators respond to get people the help they need.

Over the holidays Home Care Link staff also provided information and assistance for out-of-hours council repairs, to the emergency services, and other agencies such as out-of-hours social services.

West Lancs Council leader, Councillor Ian Moran

Meanwhile the council's housing team dealt with 114 repair jobs including heating repairs during the festive period.

And Street Scene Services continued to collect refuse and recyclable waste from approximately 48,000 homes across the borough helping to keep the streets free of litter.

The council's CCTV operators played their part in keeping West Lancashire's streets safe by assisting with 147 incidents between December 22 and January 1, including work which led to 11 arrests.

Leader of the council, Councillor Ian Moran, said: "I am very grateful to all the council staff who worked hard over the Christmas and New Year period to provide vital services to people across the borough.

Commitment

"They have shown great commitment to their jobs and to working for the people of West Lancashire."

As well as providing essential services over Christmas the council also organised for Ormskirk Market to take place on its usual days. And Beacon Park Golf Course was also running under reduced hours, as were council-owned leisure centres to enable people to keep in trim during the festivities.

Computer lessons for beginners resume

DROP-IN sessions to help technology 'novices' in the borough to learn computer skills are up and running again after a Christmas break.

The Burscough Hub Group, which offers one-to-one support for beginners, says that over the coming weeks there will also be talks on various topics, including 'Introduction to Apple'; 'Use of email'; and 'Keeping safe on-line'.

Sessions are held at the Methodist Church in Orrell Lane, Burscough, between 10am and noon each Wednesday and the first four are free.

The programme has been supported by a Lottery 'Awards for All' grant.

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Singers hit right note for Daniel!

Report by **Tom Martin**

MEMBERS of a singing group helped to raise more than £600 for charity after being inspired by a youngster from Ormskirk.

The songsters from Formby-based Catherine Victoria Music and Voice Your Voice staged a winter concert in aid of the Rays of Sunshine Children's Charity, which has helped fellow singing student, six-year-old Daniel Bell.

Daniel was just three when he underwent emergency surgery to remove a fist-sized brain tumour in June 2014, which thankfully led to him making a full recovery.

He hit the headlines last year when his mum, Rosie, spoke out about the ordeal and tried to raise awareness about brain tumours, which was featured in the Champion.

The singing group chose to support Rays of Sunshine on the suggestion of Rosie and Daniel - and the concert, held at the Emmanuel Parish Church in Southport, proved a smash hit.

Rosie said: "Rays of Sunshine are such an important charity as they bring laughter, fun and hope to children who have experienced so many hardships in their short lives. They understand just how special your child is, how special all these children are. They fill the world with magic and wonder for these brave, remarkable kids.

"Rays are as important to the children as the doctors, nurses and health care professionals who save their lives and keep them well. They make the world a better place."

Principal of Catherine Victoria Music and Voice Your Voice, Catherine Victoria Whitehall, said: "My partner, piano teacher Tom Kimmance, and I put on our annual winter charity concert for Rays Of Sunshine which had helped my singing student Daniel through his time spent fighting a brain tumour.

"Daniel's neurosurgeon was able to completely resect the tumour and with the help and care of the neurosurgical and oncology team at Alder Hey he has made a full recovery.

"On the night, we raised an incredible £601 and we would like to thank all our performers and their families for their support.

"We had students singing and playing piano throughout the evening and my vocal group, Voice Your Voice, made their debut performance."

Daniel and sister Layla with the charity cheque

History group want your yesteryear memories

OFFICIALS of a local history group are seeking to capture the memories of older residents of West Lancashire for posterity on their online archive.

Michael Dawson, founder of the group, Images of Burscough and Surrounding Areas, says: "What we would like is for residents to write down any memories or stories that they can remember from our local areas' past. This could be anything from your time at school, the shops you used to go to, your employment, wartime stories, and also the people you remember."

Michael said that submissions will be added to the archive of photos and memorabilia that has been collected over the last 20 years and will be made available for view on the group's website at www.images-of-burscough.co.uk, and also on their Facebook page.

To contribute, either send your submissions by post to Michael Dawson at 54 The Quays, Burscough, L40 5TW, or by email to wilsonmiley@live.co.uk.

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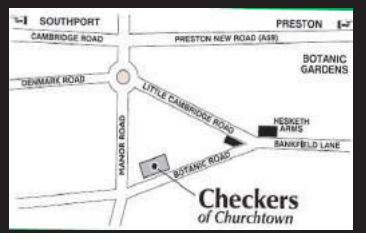

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Andy MacGregor (above) and pals will tackle a sponsored bike ride in aid of Sport Relief

Andy and pals tackle charity bike ride

A BURSCOUGH-based businessman is set to get on his bike to raise money for Sport Relief.

Andy MacGregor, owner of the Martland Mill business centre and a telecom company director, will be joined by pals Richard Hawkings and Lloyd Deevey on a sponsored cycle ride taking in telecom centres around the region.

The trio will set off from the Merseyside BT Local Business at Martland Mill at 10am on Monday, January 22. First stop will be the Skelmersdale Telephone Exchange, followed by the BT Exchange at Lancaster House, Liverpool.

Then, after taking in the Liverpool Chambers of Commerce, they will head to the BT Warrington call centre at Europa Boulevard before finishing off the 40-mile plus challenge at the Cheshire BT Local Business office in Havard Court, Warrington.

This is the second charity bike mission for cycling enthusiast Andy. Last year he raised more than £2,500 for Stand up to Cancer with a 190-mile, coast-to-coast ride.

Any well-wishers are welcome to join Andy and friends when they set off on Monday and anyone wishing to sponsor their efforts can do so by dropping in to Martland Mill or online at https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/liverpoollb.

Plan for care home on site of disused pub recommended for approval

Report by **Kenny Parker**

PLANS to demolish a disused pub and build a care home on the site have been recommended for approval by West Lancs Council's director of development and regeneration, John Harrison.

A previous planning application by The Athena Group to build on the site of the former Red Lion in Liverpool Road South, Burscough, was rejected in November 2015 due to the scale of the proposed building being out of character with the area.

The proposal was also considered to constitute overdevelopment in terms of highway safety.

However, revised plans by the care group, which has homes in Ormskirk, Burscough, Southport and Formby, have now been deemed acceptable by Mr Harrison and will be considered by the council's planning committee meeting on Thursday, January 18.

The disused Red Lion pub

The proposed new, two-storey home would accommodate 80 residents and create an estimated 80 jobs.

Under the plans, in addition to the demolition of the Red Lion, which dates back to around late 18th century, a nearby detached house and light industrial buildings will also be pulled down.

Mr Harrison's report for the meeting refers to how efforts to keep the pub open had failed and that the establishment has been closed for a considerable period of time.

The report also refers to the loss of employment at the businesses run from the adjoining buildings - said to be a small engineering firm and a cleaning company - but said that these losses were compensated by the employment that would be created.

The report states: "The loss of employment opportunities as a result of the loss of the industrial units will be fully mitigated by the application proposals. The proposals are envisaged to create up to 80 full and part-time job opportunities, which will provide significantly increased employment opportunities than the current operations at the site."

Prince's Trust seeks new team members

OFFICIALS of the Prince's Trust are inviting applicants from across West Lancashire to bid for places on Ormskirk Team 13.

The12-week course, starting on Monday, January 22, is designed to help 16 to 25-year-olds to gain the skills they need to help them to get into employment, further education or training.

The free course is appropriate for a range of people and additional support is offered to those who need it. Those taking part will not lose any benefits they may be on.

The Prince's Trust also offer a free bus pass to help with transport needs.

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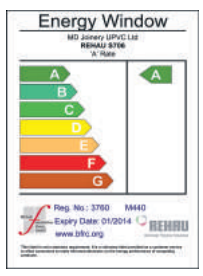

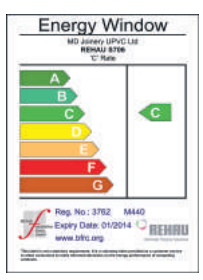

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Council promises full consultation on fracking plans

Report by **Kenny Parker**

LANCASHIRE County Council are promising a full consultation on any fracking application it receives in West Lancashire following Aurora Energy Resources' scoping request to mine for shale gas at Altcar Moss.

This is the first step in agreeing with the Mineral Planning Authority (the county council) the extent and nature of environmental assessments required to inform any subsequent planning application.

Aurora proposes to drill and hydraulically fracture both a vertical and a separate horizontal well at Altcar Moss to evaluate the potential to produce hydrocarbons from deeply-buried, carboniferous-age rocks.

A local environmental group expressed its opposition to the plans, however, and disputed claims made by Aurora that the industry would bring benefits to the local community and be safe.

Citing seismic events recorded following a fracking operation in Fylde in 2011, Maureen Mills, chairwoman of Halsall Against Fracking, said: "If this industry ever went into full production it would bring industrialisation on a scale that would totally desecrate the countryside. There is simply no evidence to support the claim that residents can be reassured that the proposed activities will be conducted safely and with minimal impact on people of the environment."

Lancashire County Council has said it will carry out a full consultation before granting any planning application. A spokesperson said: "We have received a request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion, which allows prospective developers to gain a formal opinion from a planning authority on the topic areas that should be covered with an Environmental Statement which accompanies a planning application.

Maureen Mills, chairwoman of Halsall Against Fracking, who disputes claims that fracking is safe and will be beneficial to the community.

"As part of the scoping process, we are required to consult a range of bodies responsible for environmental issues, such as Natural England, the local district council, and the Environment Agency for their views to the issues they would like to see addressed. This will inform the formal scoping opinion issued by the county council in response to the developer's request.

"This is a very early stage of the planning process and we will hold a full consultation including advertising the proposal in the local press should we receive a planning application for this site in the future."

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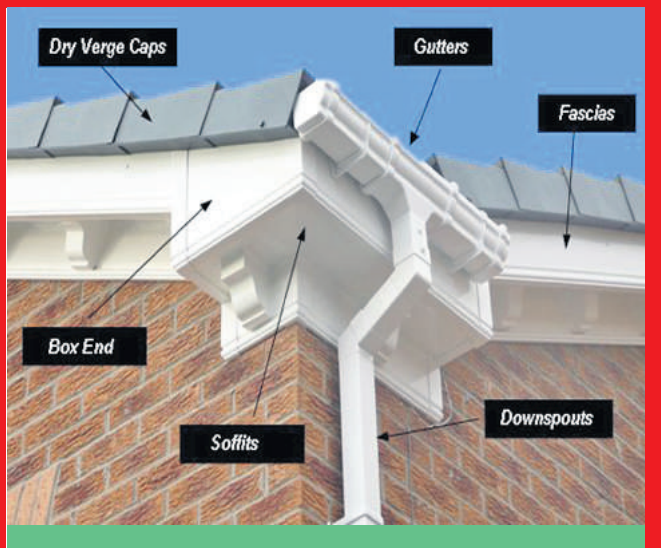

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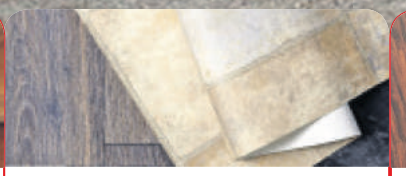

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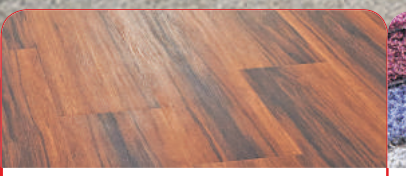

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Council backs mum's call to ban use of old tyres on public transport vehicles

Report by **Henry James**

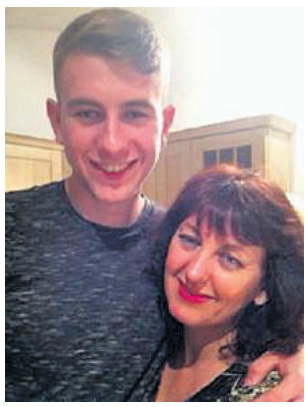
WEST Lancashire Borough Council is supporting a campaign aimed at banning tyres that are more than 10 years old being used on public transport vehicles.

The Tyred Campaign was set up by Woolton mother, Frances Molloy whose 18-year-old son, Michael was killed when the coach he was travelling in crashed on the way back to Liverpool from a music festival in 2012.

Former Edge Hill student Kerry Ogden (23), from Maghull, and the driver, Colin Daulby, also died in the tragic accident and a subsequent inquest found that the crash had been caused by a worn-out tyre.

Now West Lancs Council leader, Councillor Ian Moran, is appealing to both the Prime Minister, Theresa May and leader of the opposition, Jeremy Corbyn urging cross-party support for a change in the law.

And Kim Webber, the council's chief executive, has been asked to write to all schools in the borough asking them to require coach and bus operators they use for school trips to adhere to the provisions set out in the Tyred Campaign.



Frances with Michael

Meanwhile council officers are being asked to look at their own procedures with a view to inserting an appropriate clause in any contracts with coach and bus commercial operators.

Mrs Molloy said: "I can't even begin to explain in words the pain and the horror of losing Michael so young, but to subsequently find out it was totally preventable is a daily torture.

"Since Michael's inquest I have campaigned tirelessly for an age limit of 10 years on tyres on coaches and buses. This is a safety campaign NOT a political campaign.

"I have had overwhelming support from councils across the region and the campaign is backed by the Association of Chief Fire Officers, National Express Coaches, National Tyres Distributors Association and the Independent Festivals Association among many others."

A motion in support of the campaign by Councillor Frank McKenna was passed by West Lancs Council, despite all but one of the Conservative members abstaining, which Mrs Molloy said she failed to understand.

She said: "I feel it's important that people in West Lancashire are made aware of this as there is no logical reason not to support a campaign for safer travel."

Commenting on why they had not supported the motion, West Lancs Conservative group leader, Councillor David Westley said it was nothing to do with the subject but rather the proposed action in requiring the chief executive to write to the schools in West Lancashire as Lancashire County Council is the local education authority not the borough council.

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Hospital trust awarded extra £1.3m funding to help cope with added pressures of winter

THE Government has announced that an additional £1.3million grant will be given to help Southport and Ormskirk NHS Hospital Trust to cope with winter pressures.

The extra funding is part of an immediate £337million boost for NHS hospitals this winter in the recent Budget, in addition to an extra £2.8billion investment over the next two years.

The amount granted to the trust is the equivalent of almost 31 annual nurses' salaries.

Meanwhile, a new interim chief executive has been appointed at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust.

Ann Farrar *(pictured)* **will bridge the gap between Karen Jackson stepping down from the role today (Wednesday, January 17) and Silas Nicolls' permanent appointment to the role in April. Ms Farrar previously held the role of interim chief executive of North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust from 2012 until early 2016.**

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Borough's new eye services providers announced

Report by **Henry James**

THE NHS in West Lancashire has announced two new providers which will soon be providing local community ophthalmology (eye services) and community macular services.

Following a "stringent procurement" process, the NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), have selected Isight to provide tier 2 ophthalmology services and SpaMedica to provide community macular services for the communities of West Lancashire.

Dr Vik Mittal

Tier 2 is a community service for minor treatments only such as lids/lashes tears, red eye, corneal conditions, foreign bodies, corneal ulcers, contact lens-induced corneal infections and flashes/floaters.

Patients can still access support in their community through opticians and receive specialist treatment at hospital providers as required.

The procurement process has run since spring 2017 and included opportunities for local people to have their say so the views of patients can be considered.

Dr Rakesh Jaidka

In a joint statement, doctors Vik Mittal and Rakesh Jaidka, local GPs and board members at NHS West Lancashire CCG, who were involved in the procurement said: "This process is all about improving what's on offer locally for patients of West Lancashire.

"We know from conversations with clinicians and the community that patients are often having to travel out of area for treatments which places additional burden and time on those patients and their families.

"We are confident these commissioned services will now improve patient experience by having services available across West Lancashire where possible, and reduce waiting times.

"These services will also reduce unnecessary burden placed on GPs, as opticians, walk-in centres and A&E departments will be able to directly refer into the service without having the need to go through their GPs.

"We will now begin a mobilisation phase in which the selected providers will work with us as commissioners to develop the finer details of those services.

"The 'go live' dates for these services to start will be April 1.

"Local residents are assured that all services commissioned within this process will continue to be delivered as part of the NHS and will remain free at the point of contact."

A full briefing can be found on the CCG's website www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk. Members of the public who have a question relating to this, can contact the CCG by email at wlccg.myview@nhs.net.

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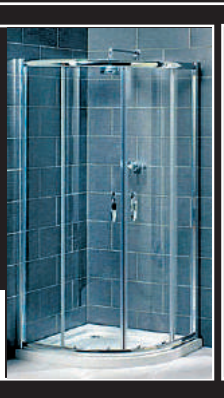

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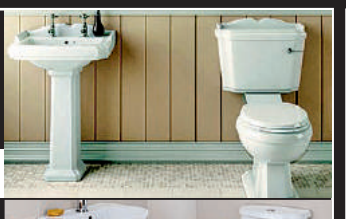

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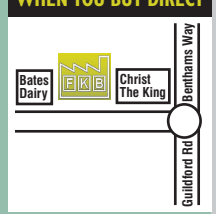

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County's police set to be first to use smart technology to link with public

Report by **Kenny Parker**

LANCASHIRE Constabulary is set to be the first police force in the country to utilise voice-activated smart technology in communicating with the public.

The force's innovation leader, Rob Flanagan, told a College of Policing conference that from this month Lancashire Police will be launching an application for Amazon's Echo to share news bulletins with residents.

The artificially intelligent device speaks with a female voice and is activated by calling 'Alexa'. It can be downloaded and has a host of functions including being able to link with various news sources, play games, read stories and control smart devices in the home. And from this month it will also be able to relay updates from the local police.

Further developments will include enabling Alexa to answer general police-related questions and in the future it could be used as a means of reporting crime.

The innovation was introduced at the conference focussing on ways to make policing more efficient at a time of unprecedented demand.

Rob Flanagan told the gathering: "If we can reduce demand on our call centres via the use of voice recognition or voice-enabled technology and give the community the information they need without them needing to ring in then that's massive."

He said that police will also use the device internally for briefing officers and added: "If we can give officers and leaders the information that is needed in the quickest time possible, in the easiest way, then I think we will see real efficiencies.

"I would also like to be the first force to use this for crime reporting. We are a long way off from that, but the technology is there."

A spokesperson for Lancashire Police said: "Later this month, Lancashire Constabulary will launch an app via Amazon known as a Skill for the Amazon Alexa device. This skill will provide a briefing service, delivering targeted audio news to our community in a new innovative way.

"People will be able to ask: 'What's the latest from Lancashire police?' and Alexa will reply with the most recent announcements, missing person appeals and good news from the force. It will allow us to engage with the public in a different way, delivering our news and information to them using an increasingly popular piece of technology.

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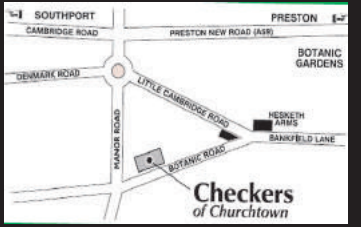

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

Meaningless tests are no solution to the problem of unsatisfactory standards of literacy

RE: The article headed 'Ofsted report bodes well for pupils' (Champion, January 3) in which Lancashire County Council's cabinet member for schools, Councillor Susie Charles, comments on the fact that many primary schools were rated as good or outstanding, adding that "they are a testament to the high quality of teaching in our schools."

Yes, Lancashire has many excellent and dedicated teachers, but they are constrained by a system which is, and has been for over 10 years now, centrally controlled through tests, league tables and inspection systems and thus reports are mainly based on how teachers comply with governmental directives.

However, results are lower at secondary level and subsequent education ministers, have admitted that many of our 11-year-olds still start secondary school unable to read, write and add up satisfactorily. The most worrying part of this concerns reading, since the ability to read with understanding is the basis for all learning.

So, where does the problem start and what is the Government's solution? I agree that it needs to be tackled in the early years but the Government's main solution to improving literacy beggars belief – it focuses on testing, and thus results in much teaching aimed at passing tests.

These begin in reception classes where four and five-year-olds must spend 20 minutes per day learning the sounds of 18 'bits' of words such as igh, oi, ear, ur etc., usually via charts and flashcards. By Year 1, the number of 'bits' increases to 36 (a further 20 minutes each day!)

In May they must take a formal test which presents them with 40 items containing 20 words and 20 non-words, e.g. keam, chob (from the 2015 test). This tells us nothing about the ability to read for meaning.

Also, our language is often irregular with respect to sound/symbol correspondence. Yet, for example, 'keam' must have ea sounded as E (as in seat) but what about ea in steak or bread? Similarly, ch in chob must be sounded as in chop but what about Charlotte or chemist?

In order to pass this meaningless test children must score 34 out of 40. Failure means retaking the test at the end of Year 2, so the concentration on 'bits' of words of words and non-words continues! What a waste of 20 minutes per day which could have been spent on actual reading!

An equally irrelevant test for six and seven-year-olds occurs at the end of Year 2, preparation having started in reception class. Knowledge of adverbs, adjectives, inverted commas, apostrophes of possession/omission and so on must be demonstrated via writing underlining, etc.

Yet these young children are still in the stages of early childhood, defined as between birth and seven/eight years by developmental psychologists, and, as all parents know, at varying stages of development, physically, socially, mentally, linguistically, etc.; stages at which they should be preparing for formal learning, not for testing which does nothing to promote a desire for reading or writing.

No wonder that some 11 and 12-year-olds are turned off literacy!

Dr Norma Mudd, retired teacher and North West representative UK Literacy Society

PICTURE of the week

TV train traveller Michael Portillo walks over the station footbridge at Maghull when stopping off in the town to visit the home and final resting place of model train maker Frank Hornby for his Great British Railway Journeys programme which will be screened tomorrow (Thursday) at 6.30pm on BBC2. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Time to end all the negativity over Brexit and take a leap forward into an EU-free future

I HAVE just read this week's edition of the Champion (January 10) and this is my response to the pro-EU pieces I have seen over the weeks.

I am a degree-educated young adult (29 years) and am fed up with all the negativity about Brexit.

Yes, it was a marginal majority that has set us on this path and clearly people are upset they didn't get their way. All the bad news about inflation, the financial sector, weakness of Sterling etc., is sad to hear but they are only short-term pains.

Are people that shorted-sighted they can only see the bad in front of them and not the good beyond?

In 2008 the world had its worse financial crash and no one could see how bad it was until it had happened. Yet anyone who knows basic economics, knows that recession happens every eight to 12 years.

Coincidently, we are ready for another, but of course, Brexit is blamed. Yes, Brexit will amplify certain problems but it is necessary for us to leave.

For the young people who are scared of the future because of Brexit, there are plenty of jobs out there for people to take, if they are willing to do them. In this day and age no job is secure, it's part of change which is inevitable.

We have strong industries in technology, construction and even our healthcare. It's about time Britain changed and stopped being shackled by socialist ideas which don't work and the EU to control us and took a leap forward into the future.

Leon Graham, Burscough

Victory for vote to leave is a reason to rejoice

I AM writing after reading readers' letters in the Champion (January 10) with regards to Brexit.

Firstly, leavers like me waited 40 years for this Referendum after promises from several prime ministers.

Mr Cameron said if he won by one vote he would take that as a victory. As we know, he didn't get that victory and leavers won by over one million.

So my advice to the 'remoaners' is to respect democracy and rejoice that we are leaving the European Union which has been using us as a cash cow for years and years.

Michael Ward, Ormskirk

Drop us a line

IF you've got a view on a topic of local or national interest which you would like to share with the readers of the Champion, why not drop us a line?

Letters to the editor should be concise, preferably no more than 350 words, and should include the sender's name, address and contact details, although not necessarily for publication.

The editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Correspondents preferring not to have their name and/or their address published may provide a suitable nom de plume.

Letters can be posted or emailed to the respective addresses listed at the top of this page.

■ PLEASE note: All views and opinions expressed in letters to the editor are solely those of the authors.

Puzzled by council's 'trial' seating claim

RE: The article in the Champion (January 10) about the new seating in Ormsirk town centre.

I remain mystified as to how the council can trial a seat. Do they have 'bottom receptors' on these seats to see how many sit on them?

Or perhaps they are going to designate the CCTV operators to keep a special watch on troublesome residents who have the temerity to take a rest to make their shopping trip more enjoyable?

Can the council spokesperson let me know how they plan to trial this?

Elderly people and those people suffering from back problems do need to sit down and seating is needed. It's bonkers to suggest a trial - they are much needed.

Jane Thompson, Our West Lancashire Scott Ward representative

Grateful for excellent care

MY husband, Mr Alan Cook was recently admitted to Southport Hospital Stroke Unit (Ward 10b) and received 'end of life' care for 11 days.

All of the staff, including consultants, doctors, nurses, health care assistants, palliative care staff (from Queenscourt Hospice), ancillary staff and the hospital chaplain, provided excellent care for my husband.

All of his needs were addressed and he was kept comfortable and pain-free.

Also, the staff provided much-needed support to me and my family during this very difficult time. Everything was explained carefully and sensitively, for which I am very grateful.

Mrs V. Cook, Ormskirk

Charged to park outside our own home but non-residents park free!

AS residents of South Terrace in Ormskirk we would like to know why we have to pay £50 per year to park our car in front of our bungalow.

Non-residents park there free of charge, some times all day and night.

We would like to know if someone from the council would reply to this letter through the Champion, as to why this is allowed to happen.

When a traffic warden was asked why he did not book them, he said he couldn't as the two bays in question belong to West Lancs Council and he works for Lancashire County Council.

If this is the case why can't he book those if they don't display a permit issued by West Lancs Council?

Either all pay or nobody pays.

Unhappy residents, details supplied

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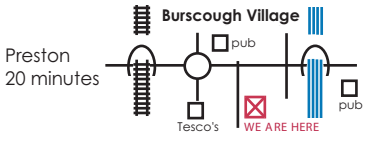

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Work on new centre gives college's budding brickies some hands-on experience

BUDDING bricklayers at West Lancashire College got some 'on-the-job' experience when they helped with the building of the new Construction, Engineering and Logistics Centre which opens at the college's Skelmersdale Campus this month.

The learners worked alongside contractors, Kier, and put their bricklaying skills to use in building the internal walls of the centre.

The centre will provide facilities in which carpenters, bricklayers, electricians, engineers, motor mechanics, logistics operatives, plasterers and plumbers of the future can learn their skills in realistic working environments.

A spokesperson for the college said: "It's crucial that we cater for the needs of the young people and adults of our region, enabling them to gain the vocational skills that employers expect.

"The new centre is central to delivering this and the college's ambition of growth in apprenticeship provision, and will meet local employment priorities."

Some of the West Lancashire College bricklaying learners who were involved with the building of the new Construction Centre pictured at the site with officials of the college and contractors, Kier.

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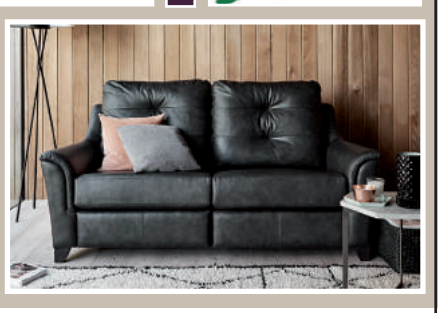

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Police chief seeks council taxpayers' views on precept rise

FOLLOWING the Government's announcement that there will be no extra money from the Home Office to tackle crime in Lancashire, the county's Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw is asking residents how much they would be happy to invest in policing.

Since 2010, Lancashire Constabulary have had to make savings of more than £72 million with an estimated £16m in further savings to find by 2020. But proposals set out by the Government mean that any extra funding to invest in policing must come from council tax payers.

Clive Grunshaw

Mr Grunshaw said: "Since 2015 the Government have assumed that Police and Crime Commissioners like myself must put up the council tax precept to minimise the impact of their cuts to funding. In their announcement before Christmas, they highlighted the need to invest in policing after years of cuts to local budgets, but are passing the buck on to local residents."

In the consultation the public will be asked if they want to keep the increase to 6p per week, which would help safeguard some police jobs; increase it by around 23p per week; or a 40p per week increase, which would allow additional resources to be invested in front-line policing.

Mr Grunshaw explained, "Every year one of my responsibilities is to set the council tax precept. This is the amount of money that householders pay towards policing in the county. With rising demands, increasing costs through inflation and growing online threats we cannot accept a further reduction in our police budget.

"Across the county residents tell me that they want to see better investment in policing. It might seem like a small amount but an extra 23p per week from the average household would raise more than £5m for policing in Lancashire. This would protect officer and staff roles that would otherwise be lost and allow us to invest in a better policing service, fit for the future."

Residents can have their say on the proposals by completing an online survey and the commissioner's office will be conducting a telephone survey with a sample of residents from every part of Lancashire in the coming weeks.

To receive a paper copy of the survey telephone 01772 533 587 and one will be posted out.

Quit Squad step up drive to encourage smokers to kick the habit in 2018

TO coincide with a new Public Health England TV campaign highlighting the dangers of tar in cigarettes, smokers in Lancashire are being urged to stop this year with help from the county's Quit Squad.

The latest campaign has been launched to show how poisons from tar in cigarettes enter the bloodstream, spread around the body within seconds and cause damage to major organs.

It includes a 20-second television advert featuring a man lighting up outside a building and the blood vessels in his arms, face and hands turning black as chemicals from the cigarette tar enter his body.

To help explain the ongoing internal harm that is caused, a group of seven lifelong smokers declare their intention to quit after seeing the results of a lab demonstration. The test results show how their smoking has led to elevated levels of cadmium (a metal used in batteries), cancer-causing nitrosamines and carbon monoxide in their blood.

These toxic substances are among more than 4,000 chemicals released into the body with each cigarette smoked, including more than 70 known cancer-causing compounds.

Elevated levels of these substances were seen in the participants' blood and can lead to an increased risk of major damage to the body.

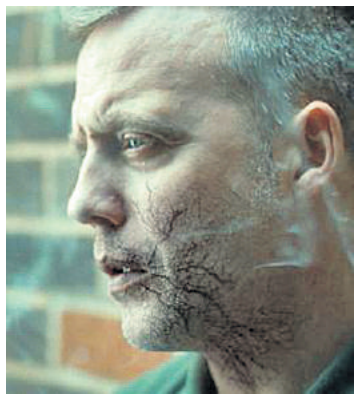
Long-term exposure to cadmium is associated with an increased risk of damage to the kidneys and bones and may lead to lung cancer. Research shows that if you regularly smoke 20 or more cigarettes a day, you are twice as likely to develop kidney cancer compared with a non-smoker.

Gareth Beck from the Quit Squad, which is delivered by Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust and funded by Lancashire County Council, said: " Tar from cigarettes causes damage to major organs, the bones and increases your risk of cancer and diseases. But no matter how long you've smoked, quitting can reduce your chances of developing cancer, heart and lung disease and other serious smoking-related illnesses. Some of the benefits are almost immediate, with improved energy and breathing within a matter of days.

"I know how difficult it is to stop but no matter how many times you might have tried and failed in the past – it's never too late, to quit."

You can access the Quit Squad service in your local community by visiting a drop-in clinic (no appointments required) or by attending a one-to-one session.

The Quit Squad also offers sessions in the community and workplace. For further details, telephone 0800 3286297, visit www.quitsquad.nhs.uk, or follow the Quit Squad on Twitter @LancashireCare #QuitSquad.



A still from the TV advert showing the effect smoking has on the blood vessels

Borough to get two new clinical pharmacists

FUNDING has been provided to employ two new clinical pharmacists in West Lancashire.

Clinical pharmacists can help free up GP waiting lists by resolving day-to-day medicine issues and consulting with and treating patients directly. This includes providing extra help to manage long-term conditions and advice for those on multiple medications.

There are presently two clinical pharmacists working in the borough and two more will be appointed later in the year following extra funding provided by NHS England.

Nicola Baxter, head of medicines optimisation at the NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "Our patients have been benefiting from the fantastic work that clinical pharmacists provide since 2015. Currently we have two clinical pharmacists in post in Aughton, at County Road Surgery in Ormskirk and across the Beacon Primary Care practices in the region, with an additional two pharmacists to be in post across the northern parishes and Skelmersdale later this year."

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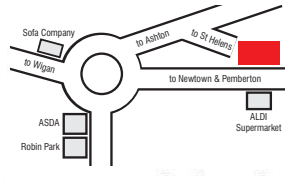

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First World War memories wanted for TV documentary

WEST Lancashire residents who have memories of the First World War are being invited to take part in a new documentary series being produced on behalf of the BBC.

Testimony Films are keen to speak to men and women who have memories of the 1914-18 war for a new BBC4 documentary series entitled Britain's Great War: The People's Story.

The series will feature the childhood stories of centenarians and super-centenarians (the over-110s!) who can still recall family life at the time, alongside archive footage and testimonies from those who fought.

They are especially interested in talking to those who may have lost a loved one at the front or who remember the air raids, the food shortages and the patriotic spirit of the time.

If you, or someone you know, has childhood stories of the war, they would love to hear from you. Email Emily Sivyer at mail@testimony-films.com, call 0117 925 8589 or write to: Testimony Films, 12 Great George Street, Bristol, BS1 5RH.

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Secret of Maghull's 'celebrity' visitor can finally be revealed...

YOU might see elsewhere in this paper that Michael Portillo has visited Maghull as part of his *Great British Railway Journeys* series, and if it is up to the standard of the many programmes in this series that I've watched we should be in for a treat.

I'm not sure what I expected when I turned up at Maghull station on a rather murky morning to witness Michael's arrival, but the almost cloak-and-dagger attitude of the BBC 2 production team did seem a bit much.

I mean, the arrival of a 'celebrity' on a train at Maghull was hardly likely to pass unnoticed by folk in general, nor his subsequent visit to the Hornby Heritage Centre in the library. So the dark threats of what would happen if we should break the embargo on mentioning the visit until it appeared in the TV listings seemed a trifle over the top.

I did try to interest them in the number of railway industry awards won by Maghull Station volunteers over the years but to no avail. Single-minded they were - as, to be fair, I suppose they really have to be. They knew what they needed for the programme and set out to get it.

Michael himself though was charm personified and when I told him of the restrictions being placed on us by the Beeb, he privately said I should ignore them.

Anyway, I am looking forward to seeing the programme tomorrow (Thursday) even though my friend Les French, who escorted Michael on his visit, told me that there was some three-and-a-half hours worth of filming which would have to be condensed into just four or five minutes of live television! Quite a lot of Maghull on the cutting room floor I fear.

Truth be told though, I was impressed with the professionalism, not only of Portillo himself, but the entire small production crew as well. Perhaps they had done it all before do you think?

Anyway, Maghull is to have its five minutes of fame on national TV, which must be a good thing.

Whilst on the subject of railways to and through Maghull, I have noticed correspondence both for and against the new station at Maghull North.

Now I must confess that on a purely personal level, I don't much like the prospect, for nothing more than selfish reasons.

I reckon that with its large car park, Maghull North will indeed fill its objective of attracting commuters away from the always full to overflowing car park at the existing Maghull station, which may well result in trains to Liverpool being full, at peak periods anyway, before they reach the existing station, which will still be the most convenient for me.

Perhaps when we get our promised bespoke new trains, with their increased passenger capacity, this will not matter so much anyway.

But in any case, it is surely pretty obvious that Maghull North is necessary, even if it does put my particular nose somewhat out of joint. Whether I like it or not, the present situation with cars being parked in residential roads near the present station is unsustainable in the long term and can only get worse as more people move into Maghull and surrounding areas out to Ormskirk and beyond.

I might not like it, and I can understand that some folk living near the new station will not like it, but frankly I can see no viable alternative.

This really should be the age of the train - and bus and bike for that matter. I don't much like bikes either, but so long as nobody expects me to wobble about on one, I can see both the environmental and health benefits they bring. Even though I still have doubts about promoting what is, no matter whose fault this may be, just about the most dangerous way of getting from A, hopefully to B, in one piece.

So I accept bikes and Maghull North station - and, let's face it, they both give me something else to grumble about!

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Farmers urged to take precautions against possible costs of fly-tipping

AN agricultural insurance expert is advising farmers to protect themselves against fly-tipping after figures released by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) revealed that incidents are on the rise.

On a regional level, there were 128,193 reported incidents in the North West between April 2016 and March 2017, at a cost of more than £9million to taxpayers.

Report by **Kenny Parker**

However, William Nicholl, head of insurance specialist Lycetts' rural division, warns that these figures are not a true reflection of the cost as they only account for incidents on council land.

He said: "Farmers are well aware of this issue. However, I don't think that they are as aware that, if they fail to deal with incidences of fly-tipping on their land leading to environmental damage, they could be liable under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

"And with many authorities looking at introducing charges for bulky waste and organic waste collections and charging for dumping waste at council-run tips, there is a fear that fly-tipping incidents on farmland will increase."

He said that, despite the increase in incidents, a relatively small number of farmers make claims for fly-tipping, as many have the equipment and manpower to deal with such incidents.

But he stressed the importance of having sufficient protection for farming businesses, particularly in the case of repeat offences.

He outlined a number of ways in which farmers can help protect themselves against fly-tippers.

"Be vigilant, communicate with neighbours and report suspicious vehicles to the authorities.

"Consult with your insurance broker, to see what cover is afforded to you in the event of an incident, and check with your local council, who may have schemes to assist with the removal of waste.

"Deter would-be tippers by ensuring that fields, particularly those which are roadside, are gated and locked where possible. If the problem persists, consider setting up security lights and a camera. This will help provide crucial evidence should the council decide to investigate.

"Finally, and most importantly, make sure that any rubbish dumped on your land is disposed of properly. By failing to remove the waste or moving it on to public land, you will leave yourself open to prosecution and could face fines of tens of thousands of pounds."

With fly-tipping on the rise farmers are being urged to take precautions against any possible costs they might face as a result of rubbish being left on their land

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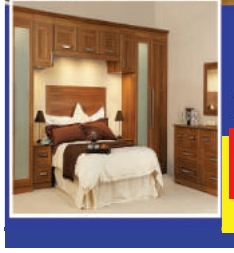

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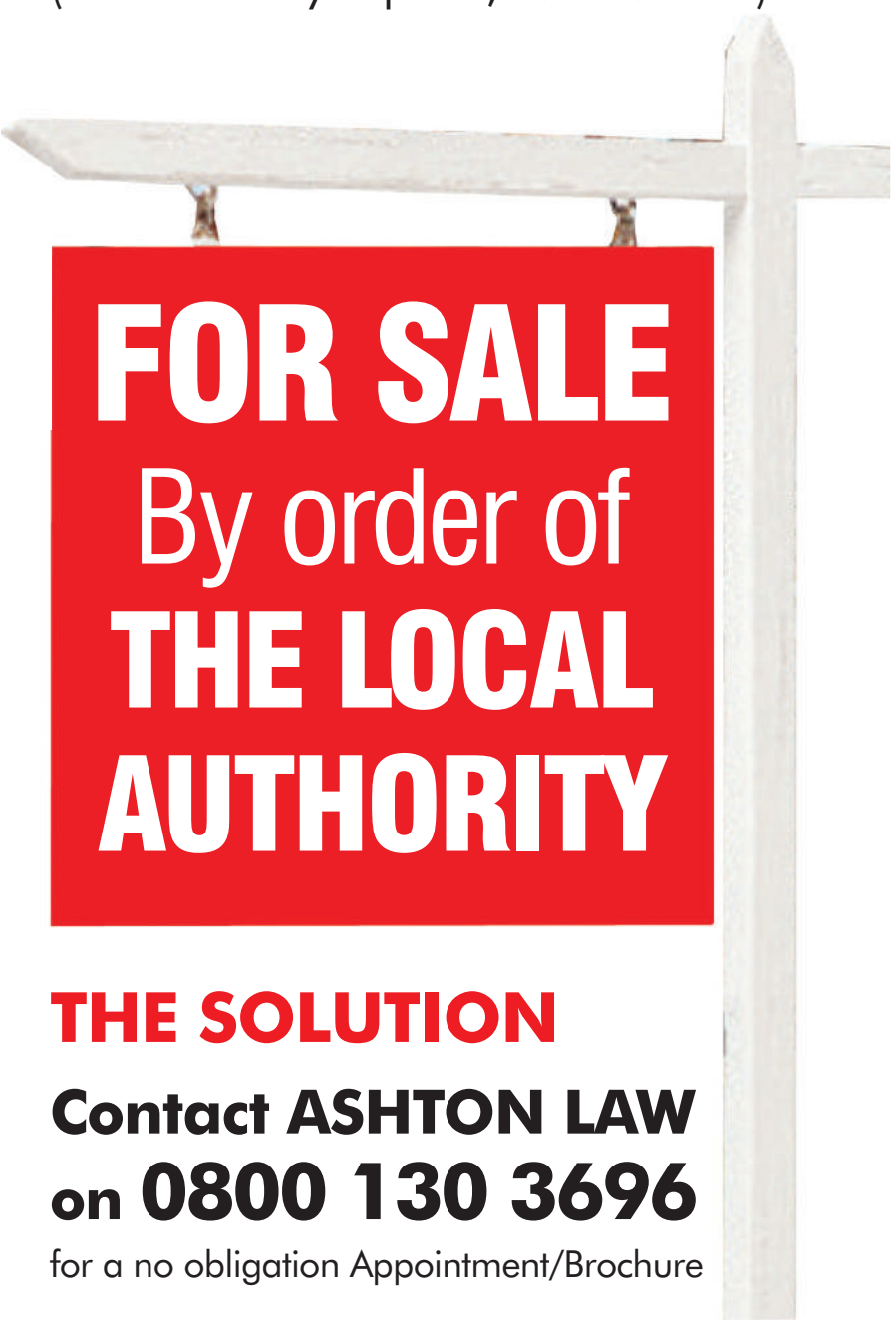

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County's primary pupils achieve higher than regional average test results in core subjects

TEST results have shown that Lancashire primary school pupils are outperforming those from other parts of the region in core subjects.

Recent national Key Stage 2 tests resulted in 61% of Lancashire school children aged seven to 11 years achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, with the regional average being 60%.

Lancashire County Council's cabinet member for children, young people and schools, County Councillor Susie Charles, said: "Once again, the Key Stage 2 results are pleasing.

"Our primary school children are doing well, with a result of 61% in the key areas of reading, writing and maths. This is above the regional average of 60%, and is definitely something we can be proud of.

"Lancashire results are also in line with the national average. This shows what excellent work our schools are doing throughout the county, and it is great to see Lancashire children performing well.

"Lancashire County Council staff support almost all of our primary schools and it is great to know that they are helping them to build such strong foundations for when pupils move on to secondary school.

"With this in mind we'll be putting an extra focus on reading next year, to make sure Lancashire pupils get the chance to be as good as they can be."

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Invitation to join in council health walks

RESIDENTS in the borough are being urged to put on their walking shoes and join in West Lancs Council's health walks.

The short, sociable walks across different locations are open to all.

They are approximately one hour long, a welcome 'cuppa' awaits at the end and you don't have to book in advance - just go along and get some fresh air into the lungs.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen, West Lancs Council's cabinet member for leisure, said: "A key priority in the Council Plan is to be ambitious for the health and wellbeing of our communities.

"If you want to be more active in 2018 our health walks can really help. A warm welcome awaits, no need to book, just turn up!"

The following weekly health walks started again for 2018 from the week beginning Monday, January 8:

- Tuesdays 10am to 11am, starting from the bowling pavilion at Richmond Park, Burscough.
- Tuesdays, 10.30am to 11.30am, starting from the Visitor Centre, Beacon Country Park, Beacon Lane, Up Holland.
- Wednesdays, 1pm to 2pm, starting from the bowling pavilion at Coronation Park, Ormskirk.
- Thursdays, 10am to 11am, starting from Banks Leisure Centre, Banks.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen

In addition to these walks, there will be 'gentle park walk' around Coronation Park, Ormskirk, on the last Wednesday of every month from 2.30pm to 3pm, starting on Wednesday, January 31.

The walks will take in a mixture of on-street footways and off-street paths. People should wear suitable clothing and footwear for the weather and ground conditions. For more information about the health walks contact Leisure Services on 01695 555804 or 01695 585145.

If you fancy longer walks the council's Parks and Countryside Ranger Service organises regular countryside walks, including the popular Walking Festival, which runs throughout August.

There will be intermediate walks of about five or six miles on the first Monday of each month and a longer walk of between eight and 12 miles on the third Sunday of each month.

These offer a chance to explore beautiful countryside and discover the wildlife in West Lancashire.

Fothcoming walks are the 12-mile Burscough Wetlands Walk on Sunday, January 21 (meet at Platts Lane in time to start at 10am); and the five-mile Rufford Ramble on Monday, February 5 (meet at St Mary's Marina in time to start at 10am).

For more information contact the Rangers on 01695 622794.

Due to the advanced nature of these walks it is advised that people wear suitable sturdy footwear with ankle support and suitable clothing for the weather.

Deputy Mayor to hand over sewing machines

THE Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancashire, Councillor Noel Delaney and Mrs Ann Stubbert, will attend the Sewing Rooms in Gladden Place, Skelmersdale at 11am on Thursday (January 18) to present four new sewing machines to the Birchwood Centre.

The presentation follows a course which the Sewing Rooms ran for the young residents of the centre.

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Lizzy Stewart's cover illustration for children's book, *There's a Tiger in The Garden*, one of 50 illustrations from World Illustration Awards Exhibition at Ormskirk's Chapel Gallery.

Gallery to host works of world's leading illustrators

SOME of the best works by illustrators from around the world will be on display at the Chapel Gallery in the coming weeks.

The Association of Illustrators have selected the best 50 pieces from more than 2,300 entries for the World Illustration Awards Exhibition to be held at the West Lancs Council-run gallery in St Helens Road, Ormskirk from Saturday, January 20 to Saturday, February 24 as part of a national tour .

Original exhibited works on display will include murals, posters, packaging and children's books by artists from the UK, USA, Italy, The Netherlands, South Korea, Hong Kong and Israel.

Notable short-listed works include Claudine O'Sullivan's complex digital illustrations for the Apple Pencil Campaign; a characterful portrait of Bill Murray for the Washington Post by artist Tony Rodriguez; and Lizzy Stewart's playful illustrations for children's book, *There's a Tiger in The Garden*.

An environmental theme also runs through this year's exhibition, with works including Chen Winner's educational animation made for CNN-titled *Econundrum*' showing the consequences of buying bottled water, and the imaginative series of illustrations titled *Yen Town - The Last Unpolluted Territory* by Sam Ki, depicting a unity of humanity and the natural world.

On the opening day of the exhibition families can also enjoy free creative activities inspired by narrative and illustration.

In the gallery's reading room a book swap has been organised with Waterstones that will continue throughout the exhibition.

Councillor Yvonne Gagen, West Lancs Council's portfolio holder for leisure, said: "The Chapel Gallery is proud to host this prestigious exhibition of international illustration. Come and take a look at some of the fantastic works on offer."

Pub quiz night in aid of donkey charity

THE Kicking Donkey pub is set to hold a quiz night in aid of a very apt animal charity.

The event at the pub in Narrow Moss Lane on Sunday, January 21 will raise funds for The Donkey Sanctuary, which cares for donkeys at centres across the UK and Europe.

Entry costs £1, starting time is 7.30pm and all entry fees, plus the proceeds of a raffle on the night, will go to the charity.

Budding bike ace bounces back from crash to claim podium finish in motorcross challenge

A BUDDING bike ace from West Lancashire clinched second place overall in a regional motorcross competition despite a last-day disaster.

Eight-year-old Archie Ormrod had been competing in the Wilden Lane Motocross Championship in Kidderminster since October and went into the final four races of the competition this month still in contention for the title.

However the Burscough Village Primary School pupil was involved in a nasty crash in the third race, involving three other riders, and had to settle for the runners-up spot.

Although his KTM 50cc bike was damaged in the crash, Archie bravely carried on to complete the race and take part in the fourth and final event, but the setback denied him the top spot overall.

However, proud dad Steve, director of the Prestige Flooring in Ormskirk, said they were more than happy to come away with second place.

Archie has been taking part in motocross since he was five, following older brother Zac,12, who also races in motocross, and dad, a road bike racer.

Steve said: "Zac has been racing since he was nine but he hasn't done a lot of competitions. He picks and chooses his races while Archie is a lot more competitive and wants to do well in championships.

"The last day of the Wilden Lane event didn't really go as planned unfortunately as Archie suffered a rather nasty crash with three other riders at the start of the third race. This left us with a bent and broken bike and a very shaken rider but we managed to mend the bike enough to finish the race in last place which rescued some vital points.

"The total points for the four races over the day left Archie in a disappointing 13th place but was just enough to keep our second place in the championship, so all in all we came away happy."

Archie proudly displays his second place trophy

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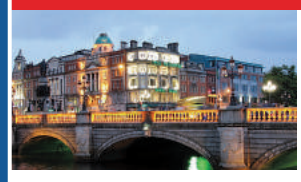

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Invitation to 'watch the birdies' again as part of RSPB garden wildlife survey

RESIDENTS in West Lancashire are once again being invited to join the thousands nationwide expected to watch and count their garden birds as part on the RSPB 's Big Garden Birdwatch 2018.

The world's largest garden wildlife survey, now in its 39th year, takes place on January 27, 28 and 29 when the public are asked to spend just one hour watching and recording the birds in their garden or local green space, then send their results to the RSPB.

Close to half-a-million people joined in the survey in 2017, counting more than eight million birds and providing valuable information about the wildlife using gardens in winter. The house sparrow remained top of the Big Garden Birdwatch rankings in the county, with blackbirds and starlings rounding off the top three.

Daniel Hayhow, a conservation scientist with the RSPB, said: "The birds we see in our garden are often the first experience we have with nature.

"Bbut it may come as a surprise to know that some of our most-loved species are in desperate need of our help as their numbers have dropped dramatically.

"Species such as starlings and greenfinches have seen their numbers visiting gardens decline by 79 and 59 per cent retrospectively since the first Birdwatch in 1979.

"The Big Garden Birdwatch is a great opportunity to get involved with helping our garden wildlife.

"By counting the birds that visit your outdoor space, you'll be joining a team of more than half-a-million people across the UK who are making a difference for nature."

As well as counting birds, the RSPB is once again asking participants to log some of the other wildlife they have seen throughout the year. This year, people are being asked to look out for badgers, foxes, grey squirrels, red squirrels, muntjac deer, roe deer, frogs and toads.

To take part in the Big Garden Birdwatch 2018, participants should watch the birds in the garden or local park for one hour at some point over the three days. Only the birds that land should be counted, not those flying over. The highest number of each type of bird seen at any one time then needs to be sent to the RSPB.

For a free Big Garden Birdwatch pack, which includes a bird identification chart, plus RSPB shop voucher and advice to help attract garden wildlife, text BIRD to 70030 or visit rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.

The blackbird - still one of the most regular visitors to our gardens in the 2017 survey findings

Search for talented youngster to take on role in award-winning musical

TALENTED youngsters in West Lancashire could land a role in a new production of an award-winning musical.

The search has started to find boys or girls to play the role of Tam in Miss Saigon which is set to be staged at Manchester's Palace Threatre from March 21 to May 12.

Described as small, cute, confident, South East Asian looking and not younger than four and not older than six, applicants for the part must live within a commutable distance of Manchester.

Cameron Mackintosh's new production of the Boublil and Schönberg musical opened in London in May 2014 to record-breaking advance sales and critical acclaim. It tells the story of young bar girl, Kim, orphaned by war, who falls in love with Chris, an American GI, but their lives are torn apart by the fall of Saigon.

Since its London premiere in 1989, the show has become one of the most successful musicals of all time.

For information on how to apply for the role, email Joanne Hawes at joanne.hawes2013@gmail.com and attach a small head and shoulders photograph.

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Portillo's Great British Railway Journey takes him to Maghull!

Report by **Jim Sharpe**

...and a quick stop-off to learn all about toys creator Frank Hornby

Michael Portillo clutching his famous Bradshaw's Guide arrives at Maghull Station with a BBC camera crew

TV rail buff and former Tory Cabinet Minister, Michael Portillo, stopped off in Sefton to record an episode of his popular Great British Railway Journeys series.

He visited the area to find out about Frank Hornby, creator of Hornby model trains as well as Meccano and Dinky Toys, who lived in Maghull for many years.

The former politician was met at the railway station by Les French, chairman of the Frank Hornby Trust which runs the heritage centre at the Meadows Leisure Centre in Maghull.

Fascinated

They did a whistle-stop tour, taking in Frank Hornby's former house, 'The Hollies' on Station Road and the heritage centre.

The presenter was fascinated by an extensive '0 gauge' Hornby train layout and the trust's extensive collection of other Hornby memorabilia, including early Meccano.

Les told the Champion: "Michael is a consummate professional and we got on very well together. After his visit to the Heritage Centre he went to St Andrew's Parish Church and viewed the Hornby family grave."

If you enjoy the programme, Les is organising an open day at the Meadows Heritage Centre on Sunday (January 21) from 11.30am - 5pm, where he hopes to have a working model train layout as well as the 'resident' collection of Hornby trains, Meccano and Dinky Toys.

Les and other trustees will be on hand, and he said: "We'll be happy to talk about Michael's visit, Hornby trains, Meccano, anything really!

And of course, we are always on the lookout for further Hornby memorabilia, and we really need more Dinky Toys as well as '00 gauge' Hornby Dublo locomotives and rolling stock if anybody can help."

The programme, in which Portillo travels from Liverpool to Dolgarrou, will be shown tomorrow evening (Thursday, January 18) at 6.30pm on BBC2.

● *Jim Sharpe's One Man and His Dog - p.20*

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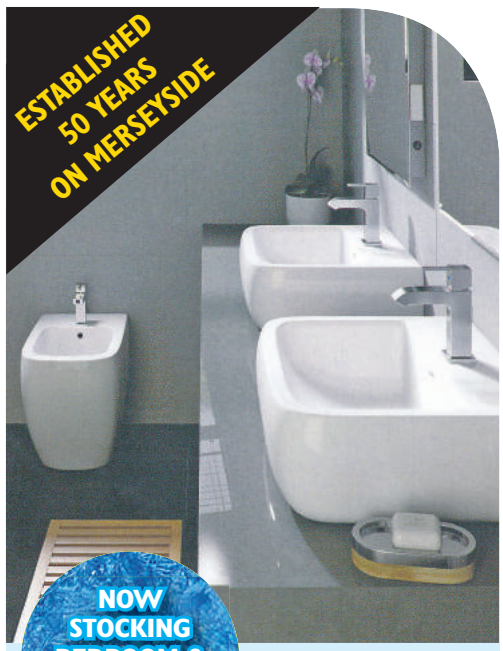

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County Councillor Nikki Hennessy with pupils at Asmall Primary School

Primary pupils serve up a musical treat for special guest

ORMSKIRK County Councillor Nikki Hennessy was treated to a mix of musical performances when she attended Asmall Primary School's annual coffee morning.

The event, which helps to raise money for the school in Tennyson Drive, Ormskirk, is held each year so that each class can show off their festive-themed entertainment to family and friends.

Cllr Hennessy, Lancashire County Council's shadow portfolio holder for young people's services and schools, enjoyed listening to renditions from the musical Oliver and the children playing brass instruments and the recorder.

She said: "What a fabulous event to see each individual class come out and entertain everyone. Lots of many happy memories were made for all concerned. A big thank-you to all staff and pupils for a great effort

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Care trust pledge to support employment opportunities for military veterans in NHS

LANCASHIRE Care NHS Foundation Trust has signed up as a pilot organisation in a programme which pledges to support employment opportunities for military veterans in the NHS.

The Step into Health programme connects employers in the NHS to people from the armed forces community, 120,000 of whom are said to be currently looking for work in the UK, by offering an access route into employment and career development opportunities.

The programme recognises the transferable skills and cultural values that armed forces personnel develop when serving, and how they are compatible with those required within NHS roles.

The trust is looking to raise awareness and improve access to employment and is working in partnership with neighbouring trusts and local organisations that work with the armed forces.

The pledge includes providing insight days and work experience placements for military personnel to get an understanding of roles within the health service, including apprenticeship opportunities. The trust is also reviewing its recruitment process and removing any barriers to support the pledge including improving its recruitment web pages in order to make jobs more available.

Chief executive at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, Professor Heather Tierney-Moore, said: "Our pledge to the Step in to Health campaign shows our commitment and support to providing the best opportunities for military veterans.

"We recognise and value the transferable skills, experiences and commitment of the people that have served in the armed forces and believe that these attributes support our own values within Lancashire Care and the wider NHS."

The trust has a number of staff champions across the organisation to support individuals from the armed forces directly.

It has also received a bronze award as part of the Ministry of Defence employer recognition scheme and is working towards silver.

Travel agents in call for clampdown on bogus holiday sickness claims

HOLIDAYMAKERS are being approached by claims companies urging them to lie about being sick during their trip in order to pocket a pay-out, according to the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA).

Figures released by the association reveal that one in five travellers from Britain were contacted on their return home by firms encouraging them to make a false claim. Now ABTA is calling on the Government to crackdown on the claims and bring in measures ahead of the 2018 holiday season.

Common claims made by holidaymakers is that they fell ill due to food they ate at the hotel. However, making a false compensation claim is fraud and could result in a large fine, criminal record or jail term of up to three years.

The figures, from a YouGov survey, reveal that most people are contacted by phone, text or email, although some even say they have been approached in person on arrival back at the airport.

Mark Tanzer, ABTA's chief executive said: "False claims don't just make UK holidaymakers vulnerable to serious penalties, they're also costing travel companies and hotel owners tens of millions of pounds and tarnishing the reputation of the British abroad."

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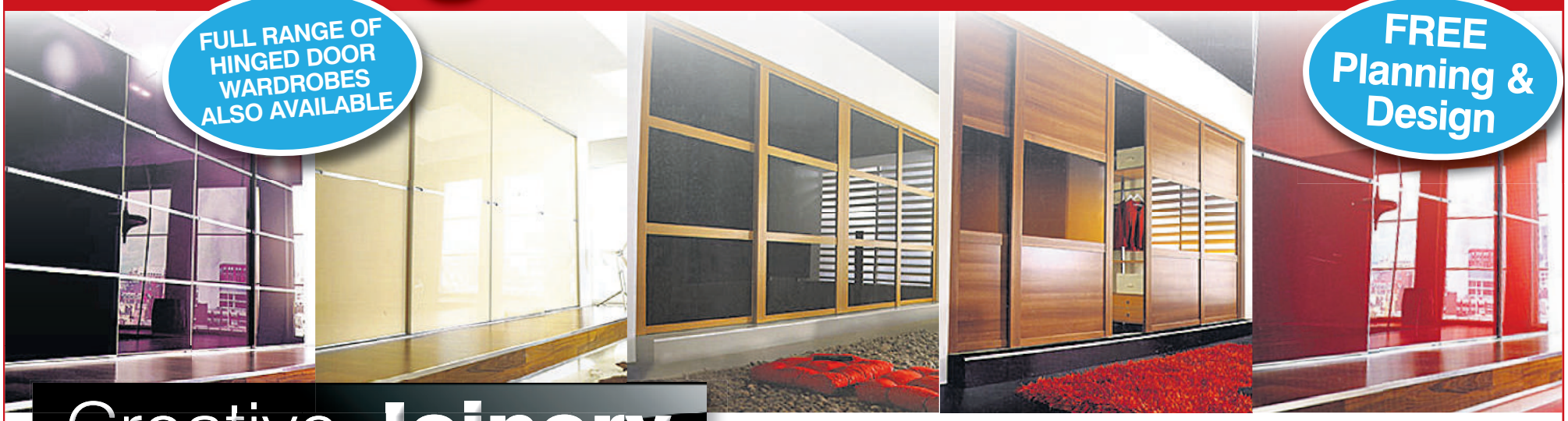

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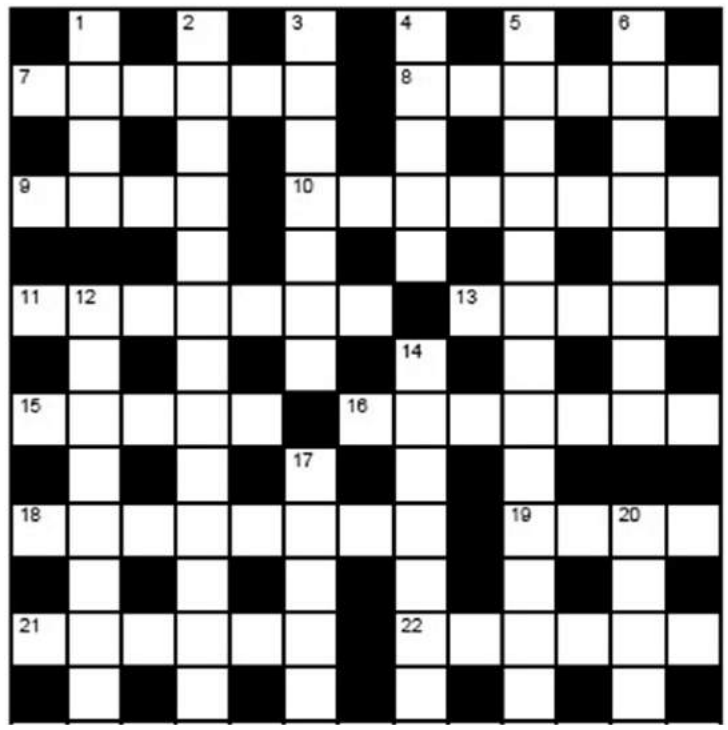

Last week's solutions:

Across: 7. Consciousness. 8. Stoicism. 9. Pity. 10. Abstain. 12. Myrrh. 14. Crate. 16. Licence. 19. Visa. 20. Referral. 22. Warm-heartedly.

Down: 1. Dolt. 2. Assist. 3. Militia. 4. Dummy. 5. Snappy. 6. Esoteric. 11. Barbican. 13. Misfire. 15. Trauma. 17. Earned. 18. Greed. 21. Axle

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ACROSS

7. A poem of 14 lines typically having 10 syllables per line (6)
8. Person in charge of a group or organisation (6)
9. Sport similar to hockey played on horseback (4)
10. Liquid fat used in cooking and as a salad dressing (5, 3)
11. Of or arousing gratification of the senses and physical pleasure (7)
13. Dog-like African scavenger (5)
15. Commerce (5)
16. Person who has had a limb surgically removed (7)
18. In the open air (2, 6)
19. Large deciduous tree native to India and SE Asia, yielding a hard, durable timber (4)
21. Winged insect (6)
22. Latin phrase used in footnotes to refer to something mentioned previously (6)

DOWN

1. Neither very good nor very bad (2-2)
2. Thoughtless (13)
3. Low upholstered seat without a back or arms that can serve as a box (7)
4. Assert, maintain (5)
5. Barrier made up of fireproof material that can be lowered to separate the auditorium and stage in a theatre to prevent the spread of a fire (6, 7)
6. Open resistance (8)
12. Signed up for something (8)
14. Colourless gas with a characteristic pungent smell (7)
17. One of the Home Counties (5)
20. The top or highest part of something, especially one forming a point (4)

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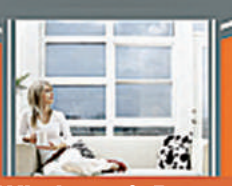

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Ray thrilled to star in Jack and the Beanstalk

FE-fi-fo-fum - get ready for some panto fun!

As LHK Productions announce that leading the all-star cast for their Easter panto, Jack and The Beanstalk, will be Liverpool's own Ray Quinn.

This egg-cellent production will be scaling new heights at The Epstein Theatre from Thursday, March 29 to Sunday, April 8 and tickets are on sale now.

Multi-talented singer, dancer and actor, Ray first came to attention in 2000 playing Anthony Murray on Channel 4's Brookside, and won the hearts of the nation in 2006 on ITV's The X Factor where he went all the way to the final, finishing runner-up.

He then skated to victory not once, but twice on the ITV show Dancing On Ice first as Series 4 champion in 2009, and then again on the All Stars series in 2014.

On joining the cast, Ray Quinn said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be coming home to Liverpool and appearing on The Epstein stage. There is no better feeling than playing to an audience in your home town! Panto is great fun, I always have a great time and I can't wait to be back. I'll see you at Easter Liverpool!"

LHK Productions Managing Director Lee Kelly added: "We are delighted to have cast Ray as Jack for our Easter panto. He is a local lad, audiences from Liverpool know and love him! He is a true professional, and has appeared in some of the UK's biggest stage shows, so I know he will be a great addition to the show!"

Adult tickets are £16.50, concession are £15.50 and a family ticket is £54.

For more ticket information and to book, call 0844 888 4411 or visit www.epsteinliverpool.co.uk

Ray Quinn

The cast of Beauty and the Beast. Picture by Ron Ellis

Beauty and the Beast goes down a treat!

Beauty and the Beast
All Souls Dramatic Club
The Atkinson, Southport
Review by Ellen Campbell

ALL Souls Dramatic Club are renowned in Southport for their superb pantomimes.

Written and directed once again by Cliff Gillies, Beauty and the Beast had all the makings of a professional show.

With the French flags flying high and the dancing troupe in red white and blue the audience was transported to a little village in France for the tale of Beauty and the Beast.

Comedy was in plentiful supply with Cliff Gillies reprising his role as panto dame, this time as Dame Doralee.

Leading lady, the beautiful Belle, was played by Chloe Hughes, another hugely talented performer who sang and danced her way through the panto magnificently.

Belle fell in love with Prince Adam (Chris Seery) but he was engaged to the 'wicked witch' of the show, Celine (Lucy Brindle), leader of a squad of troublemakers, Schnapps, Kahlua and Tequila (Mia Scott, Joanne Wasilew and Gabbi Haddock), who represented the teenagers of the day with their non-stop selfies and updates to social media.

Furious at rejection, Celine turned Adam into The Beast, Ian Lawson in good voice as Adam's ferocious alter ego.

Chauvon (Neil Woods), epitomised the self-centred delusional hero everyone loves to loathe while Helen Gillies was Prince Adam's valet, Mondiane.

Three hours including the interval, is really too long for any pantomime, especially for the little ones in the audience who had to wait until late in the second half for the obligatory slapstick scene where Gustav (Mark Haygarth) doused with gunge and water as he was made into a cake.

In fact, with 19 numbers in the show, this was more of a musical than a children's panto, and one with a clear message to the young people in the audience, and especially the young females, namely to grow up knowing you can achieve anything you wish and never to let anyone underestimate you.

With sparkling costumes, exhilarating dance routines and rousing music, Chris Gillies and his production team of Matthew Hughes, Katie Palfrey and Chloe Hughes, along with the whole cast and backstage staff, well deserved their enthusiastic applause.

Star Rating: 8/10 - J'ai aimé le panto!

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23 THE ROLLING STONES STORY
24 RUSSELL WATSON: CANZONI D'AMORE

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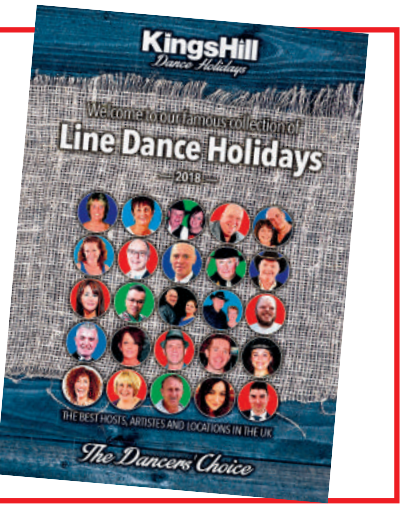

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HOUSE AND HOME

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LANTERN STYLE Pendant light fitting. Requires one light, 6 bevelled glass panels, brass plated, ideal for hall, unused £35 ono 07709 568521

HALL MIRROR Victorian with coat hooks panelled oak £45. New white toilet no cistern £8. Three piece bathroom suite, good condition £30 07934496817

CURTAIN RODS Two sizes 240cm 180cm. None metallic, very light, easy to put up, colour gold £8. Hesketh Park area. 01704 546588

POWERFUL HOOVER Vacuum cleaner, brand Hurricane. Power 850w, bagless, variable settings, excellent, pick up £45. Hesketh Park area 01704 546588

ROLLER BLIND Cream, nine different sizes all with brushed chrome eyelets, excellent condition Call for prices 07786 298207

OVAL TABLE Mahogany, folds down, comes with high backed chairs, beige fabric, seats in very nice condition £95 0151 4767482

3 SEATER Sofa, pearl grey, almost new, superb condition, no marks, only six months old, hardly used, selling due to moving £160 07860 666955

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VICTORIAN SCROLL internal brass door handles six also three bathroom style and one lock style will sell separately 01515263851

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MAHOGANY TV cabinet/storage unit. H44" W30.5" D20.5". Has 2 full length doors (with beading pattern on) which fold back. Ex con £50 07855222552

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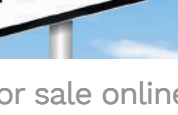
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Community Support Worker

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The successful applicant will value others and have a person centred approach supporting people with dignity and respect. Posts Available:- 4 x 30 hours a week Contract (part-time) and 4 x 20 hours a week Contract (part-time).

This positions are part-time, please note the salary quoted is full-time equivalent. If successful the salary received will be paid on a pro-rata basis.

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Lancashire County Council has a Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders this is available to all applicants upon request.

Closing date: 3 February 2018.

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Lancashire County Council

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Closing date: Friday 26th January 2018

We are looking for a Part Time Experienced

Administration Assistant to work in our busy finance department

The role includes all aspects of sales ledger and purchase ledger and requires a high level of accuracy. Computer literacy is essential together with a great telephone manner and excellent customer service skills.
Candidates must be able to work on their own initiative as well as part of a team and have a positive approach to work.
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Stapleton Rd, Formby L37 2YN
Tel: 01704 879315
Headteacher: Mr G Aldridge MA (Oxon), MEd

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TEMPORARY TEACHING ASSISTANT

(Level 2) - 27.8 hours per week, term-time only
(Scale D - £10,899 - £11,543)

Temporary until 31 August 2018, in the first instance, duties will include in-class support to students with special educational needs and providing assistance with personal hygiene needs.

LUNCHTIME SUPERVISOR

7.5 hours per week, term-time only
(Scale B - £2,630 per annum)

Working as part of a team, duties will include the supervision of students using the dining and packed lunch areas during lunchtime.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANT

15 hours per week, term-time only
(Grade D - £5,881 - £6,228)

The successful candidate must be enthusiastic and motivated. Previous relevant industrial experience in the use of cutting machinery and equipment would be an advantage.

REQUIRED FOR MARCH 2018

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21.6 hours per week, term-time only Maternity Leave Cover
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Range High is committed to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children so the successful candidate must be able to obtain a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure (via the Disclosure and Barring Service) to be appointed.

Further details and an application form can be obtained from the school's website at www.range.sefton.sch.uk

Closing date: 4pm on Friday 26 January 2018

PETS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HAMPSON ERIC

Sheila and family would like to express their sincere gratitude to all relatives, friends and neighbours for attending the funeral service and for their help and understanding shown at this sad time. Thank you for the kind messages of support, cards of condolence and generous donations for the Salvation Army. Much appreciation is offered to the staff at the Talbot Hotel for their hospitality after the funeral and to Reverend David Reynolds for a lovely and comforting service. Many thanks to Derek Crawford and the team at Howard's Funeral Directors for the dignified funeral arrangements.

KIDMAN CHRISTINE JOAN

(Nee Salisbury & Tracey)

The family would like to thank all who attended the funeral and for their kind words of sympathy at such a difficult time. Special gratitude to Father Anders for his kind ministrations. Appreciation to Tarleton Bowling Club for their hospitality and Creme De La Creme for providing the catering. Thank you for all who so kindly donated in Christine's memory to the Foxton Centre, Preston. Also thank you to Dave and Claire at Newland & Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors for their caring and professional services.

TEASDALE LES

The family would like to thank everyone for attending the Funeral Service and the kind words of sympathy received. Appreciation to Reverend Viv Gasteen and Old Roan Methodist Church. Thank you for all who so kindly donated in Les's memory to The British Heart Foundation. Also thank you to Dave and Claire at Newland & Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors who supported us through a difficult time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIVESLEY STAN

Joan, Judith, Barbara and family would like to express their sincere thanks to all relatives, friends and neighbours for all their sympathy cards, messages of condolence and donations for Queenscourt Hospice received during their recent sad loss. They would also like to thank Revd. Ross Moughtin for his kind words of comfort and Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors for their dignified funeral arrangements. Also, a really big thank you to the amazing staff of Queenscourt and Care Concern, and the incredible team of District Nurses for their support at this difficult time.

To place a family **announcement** please call 01704 392392 or visit champnews.com

BIRTHDAY MEMORIAMS

WELSH KENNY

5th Birthday away from your loving family
20th January

Happy Birthday Kenny love and miss you every day from loving wife Mary x Happy Birthday to our Dad and grandy thinking of you today and every day sending love and hugs on your special day x Kenny Jnr, Lynn, Anne, Philip, Derek, Jeanette and Grandchildren xxxxxx

To place a family announcement please call 01704 392392

IN MEMORIAM

BARTON NIGEL

Our dearest Son
16th JAN 2014

4 years have passed since we saw you last. We miss you every day since you went away. Love you always. Mum & Dad

PRAYERS

DEAR SACRED HEART OF JESUS

In the past I have asked for many favours. This time I ask for one special favour. (mention it)

Take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine.

Amen.

Say this prayer for three days, promise publication and your favour will be granted.
Never to be failed.

B.D.

DEATHS

MOON JEAN

Passed away
14th January 2018
Aged 80 Years

Beloved Wife of the late John. Mum to Ian, Deborah and Suzanne. Loving Nana to her nine Grandchildren and seven Great-Grandchildren.

Our family chain is broken
And nothing seems the same
But as God calls us one by one
The chain will link again.

Reunited with our Dad.
RIP Mum.

For funeral arrangements and further enquiries please contact Graham J Clegg Funeral Directors, 7 Dover Road, Maghull. Telephone 0151 520 3330.

IN MEMORIAM

BIRCH BARRY (BAZ)

Died 18th January 2007
40 years old

Though absent you are always near,
so loved,so missed so very dear,
with tender thoughts forever true,
today and always we think of you.

Love Mum and Dad

XX

DEATHS

FLETCHER EVELYN

Peacefully in a Care Home after a short illness
Aged 99 years

Dearly loved Wife of the late Harry, Mother of Colin, Mother-In-Law of Jeanie. Auntie to Pauline, Barry & Julie. Special thanks to the staff at Stocks Hall Nursing Home and to Dr. Ganga. Funeral Service and Interment at St. Johns C.E. Burscough, on Wednesday 24th January 2018 at 10:30am. Family flowers only by request but donations if so desired for St. John C.E. Church. Donations and further enquiries please to Oliver Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a Liverpool Road North, Burscough. Tele: 01704 891555

MACRAE ANN

4th January 2018
Passed away at Southport Hospital aged 80 Years

Ann will be missed by all her family and friends.

Funeral service to take place at Ormskirk Parish Church on Monday 22nd January 2018 at 11:45am followed by committal at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Dementia UK.

Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, PR4 6RJ. 01772 811165.

Announcements

DEATHS

BURROWS ELIZABETH (BETTY)

Aged 99 years
Passed away peacefully in Southport Hospital on the 8th January 2018

Loving Mother of Ivy and Son-in-Law Mike.Devoted Nan to Janet,David and Claire and their partners Neil,Diane and Simon and all her Great Grandchildren and Great Great Grandchildren. Funeral service will take place at West Lancs Crematorium Burscough on Friday 19th January 2018 at 10.45am. Family flowers only please,donations will be gratefully accepted for the British Heart Foundation c/o H Hardman and Co Funeral Directors, Marlborough House,Witham Road, Skelmersdale,WN8 8HP.

HARTLEY JOCELYN (FORMERLY SHUTT) (NEE POLLITT)

3rd January 2018
Aged 92 years

Dearly loved Wife of the late Jack Hartley. Much loved Mother of Nicholas, Patricia and loving Step-Mother of Brian, Tina and the late Jack. Devoted Grandmother to all her Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren. Jocelyn will be greatly missed by all her family and friends, especially by her church family at Leyland Road Methodist Church. A Service to celebrate the life of Jocelyn will be held at Leyland Road Methodist Church on Monday 12th February at 12:00 noon. Donations are being gratefully received in lieu of flowers for Leukaemia Care. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

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DEATHS

FRYER PETER

30TH DECEMBER 2017
Suddenly at Home Aged 83 Years

Much Loved Husband of Sheila. Loved Dad, Grandad and Great-Grandad. Funeral Service at St Andrews Church Maghull on Friday 19th January at 11.45am Cremation following at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough. Family flowers only please but Donations if desired for The Alzheimers Society c/o Graham J Clegg Funeral Service 7 Dover Road, Maghull, L31 5JB Tel 0151 520 3330 or via www.cleggfunerals.co.uk

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TYSON MARGARET (NEE PHILLIPS)

8th January 2018
Aged 86 years

Much loved Wife of the late Kenneth. Devoted Mum of Peter, Anne and the late Katherine, Mother-In-Law of Judith and Chris, loving Grandma of Fred, Mez, Alfie and Eddie, generous Sister of Georgina (Liz) and the late John. Service at Southport Crematorium on Monday 22nd January at 12:40pm. Donations are being gratefully received in lieu of flowers for Queenscourt Hospice. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

KENNARD MARGARET ROSE

6th January 2018
Peacefully at Cedar Grange Rest Home, aged 84 years

Devoted Wife of the recently departed Vincent. Much loved Mother of Susan and loving Mother-in-law to Stephen. Adored Nana to Nicholas and Michael. Will be sadly missed by us all. Funeral service at St. Luke's Church, Formby on Friday 19th January 2018 at 2.00pm followed by burial at Birkdale Cemetery, Liverpool Road, Ainsdale. No flowers please, but donations if desired to the Alzheimers Society would be gratefully received c/o H. Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE. T 0151 924 4805

DEATHS

ROSS ROBERT THOMAS

7th December 2017

Will be sadly missed by all his family and friends. Service and Burial at St. Luke's Church, Crosby on Monday 22nd January 2018 at 12:00 noon. Family flowers only, donations if desired to The Stroke Association C/o H. Leslie Humphreys, 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE Tel: 0151 924 4805

CLARKSON WILLIAM (Bill)

Passed away after a long illness on 31st December 2017
Aged 84 years

Much loved Husband of Pauline and beloved Dad of Bruce and Valerie, Father-In-Law of Leslie and Adrian and Step-Dad of Charles and Nicola. Funeral Service at St.Joseph's Church, Birkdale, on Wednesday 24th January at 12:45pm, followed by Cremation at Southport Crematorium at 2:00pm. Family flowers only please, but donations, if desired, to Queenscourt Hospice. All enquiries to Craven's Funeral Directors, 0151 228 3900

EDDEN CATHERINE

9th January 2018
Peacefully at Clatterbridge Hospital aged 63 years of Skelmersdale

The dearly loved Wife of Mike. She will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service at St Paul's Church, Skelmersdale on Friday 19th January 2018 at 1.15pm followed by cremation at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough. Family flowers only please, donations if desired for Queenscourt Hospice or Clatterbridge Hospital. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Scarisbrick. Tel 01695 722122/720012.

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DEATHS

MURPHY CHRISTOPHER JOHN

Peacefully at home on 14th January 2018
Aged 75 years

Dearly loved Father to Christian and Philip, Father-in-law to Zoe and Emily, Grandfather to Brooke, Oliver, Caroline, and Peter, and loving partner to Lorrayne. Chris was many things to many people and will be sadly missed by all. The celebration of his life will be held at West Lancashire Crematorium, Pippin Street, Burscough on Friday 19th January at 3:15pm, attendees are asked to dress with colour and cheer. Donations are being gratefully received in lieu of flowers for Queenscourt Hospice. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 82 Station Road, Ainsdale, PR8 3HW. Telephone: 01704 577786.

ROMNEY MARY TERESA

12th January 2018
Passed away peacefully
Aged 88 years
of Aughton

Devoted Wife of John. Requiem Mass at St. Mary's Church, Aughton, on Monday 22nd January at 3:00pm. Followed by Committal at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough. Family flowers only by request, but donations if so desired for St. Mary's Church, Aughton. Donations and further enquiries please to Sally Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors. 20 Moss Delph Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk. Tele: 01695 424888.

DAVIES WILLIAM OWEN

After a long illness peacefully in Hospital on 10th January 2018
Aged 84 years

Much loved Husband of the late Audrey. Dear Dad of Kerrie and Sue. Dear Father-In-Law of David and David. Dear Grandpa and Grandad to Molly, Eleanor, Alex and Emily. Bill will be sadly missed by all his family, many friends and all who knew him. Funeral Service and Committal will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Monday 29th January 2018 at 3:15pm. Family flowers only by request but the family are gratefully receiving donations for Queenscourt Hospice. Further enquiries to Co-operative Funeralcare, 22c Wigan Road, Ormskirk L39 2AU. Tel: 01695 577244

BEVAN GRAHAM

7th January 2018
Aged 83 years

Beloved Husband of Margaret. Much loved Dad of Philip, Sheila and Janice. Dearest Grandad of Jo, Abigail, Isla, Laura, Alice and Sam. Graham will be greatly missed by all who knew him. He died of Cancer which he bravely fought to the end. He always had a smile. Grahams funeral will be held at Blundellsands Methodist Church on Friday 19th January 2018 at 11am. Family flowers only please. Donations gratefully received for Woodlands Hospice C/O H. Leslie Humphreys 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE. Tel 0151 924 4805.

WINROW CHARLES (Charlie)

Passed away peacefully on 7th January 2018
aged 94 years
of Ormskirk

Dear Husband of the late June, Much loved Dad of Ian, Loved and missed by all his family and friends. Funeral Service at West Lancs Crematorium today Wednesday 17th January 2018 at 10:45am. Family flowers only please by request donations if so desired for R.S.P.C.A Halsall. Donations and further enquiries please to Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a, Liverpool Road North, Burscough Tele: 01704 891555

BULLEN DAVID JOHN

3rd January
Aged 65 years

Slipped away peacefully but unexpectedly. Much loved Husband of Pat, Dad of Katy, Brother of Martin and Pete and friend to many. *He touched more lives than he realised and will be greatly missed.* Funeral service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Friday 19th January at 12.15pm. Family flowers only please; donations if preferred to Queenscourt Hospice. Inquiries to Neal Buckley, Tarleton Funeral Home, 49 Church Road, Tarleton PR4 6UQ. Tel: 01772 301700

ROBERTS (Nee Pearson) JANET (JAN)

Sadly passed away on 5th January 2018, aged 54 years, of Ormskirk

Loved and missed by all her family. Funeral Service at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Friday 19th January at 11.30am. Family flowers only please, donations if so desired for Alderhey Children's Hospital. Donations and further enquiries please to Lisa Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20, Moss Delph Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, L39 5DZ. Tele: 01695 424888

FUSCO REINA-DEL JOSEPHINE

Passed away peacefully at home on the 2nd January 2018
Aged 65

Devoted Wife to Michael, Loving Mother to Amanda, Adrian & Alexandro. Treasured Grandma and Great-Grandma. Funeral Service to take place Friday 19th January at Our Lady of Lourdes Church 12pm followed by Interment at Sacred Heart, Liverpool Road Cemetery, Southport. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Southport Life boats. Further enquiries to

Newland & Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton. 01772 811165

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West Lancashire Borough Council

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA / LISTED BUILDING

Application No: 2017/1330/FUL Erection of performing arts centre (teaching block and auditorium) with associated landscaping, external works and substation at Scarisbrick Hall School, Southport Road, Scarisbrick.

Application No: 2017/1332/FUL Conversion of former reservoir to swimming pool (ancillary domestic use) including external alterations at Stand Farm, Spa Lane, Lathom.

Application No: 2018/0005/FUL Retrospective planning application for a single summer house / sun shelter within the garden of Old Oak Barn, Sanderson Lane, Hilldale, Heskin.

Application No: 2018/0006/LBC Listed Building Consent - Retrospective planning application for a single summer house / sun shelter within the garden of Old Oak Barn, Sanderson Lane, Hilldale, Heskin.

Application No: 2018/0014/FUL New shop front and windows. Part change of use to 5 bed student HMO. Retention of shop (A1) with proposed alternative use as financial /professional services (A2) at 30 Burscough Street, Ormskirk.

The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application no. Any comments made will be available for public inspection.

Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development

In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI Dated: 17th January 2018
Director of Development and Regeneration PDNOT981

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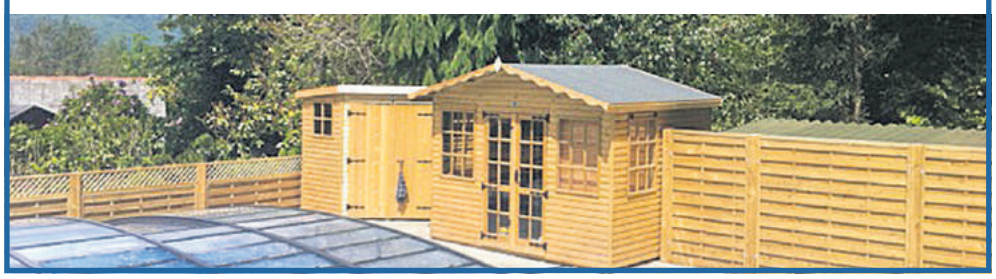

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Toyota seems - to me - to have forgotten that it is a car maker

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The e-Pallette is quite literally a box on wheels - and a possible vision of our motoring future

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TOYOTA seems to have forgotten that it's a car maker. Or at least that's the impression you'd be entirely right for getting if its latest offering is anything to go by.

Just when I was readying myself to find out what it'll be unveiling at this week's Detroit Motor Show – a successor to the Supra, perhaps, or a long overdue rework of the C-HR's rear end – it turns out that it's gone to the Consumer Electronics Show instead, which is a sort of American tech-fest where everyone excitedly looks at laptops and smartphones.

Obviously it couldn't unveil a car because that's old hat, 20th century tech – a box on wheels, if you like. So the world's biggest automotive giant decided to unveil just that. A box on wheels –and Toyota will thank me for calling it that.

The e-Pallette might look like something you'd attack with an Allen key after a weekend visit to IKEA but that's exactly the point; it's meant to be empty, and already there are various big names who are touting this autonomous cube as ideal tools for their business.

Amazon likes it because it can be used as an autonomous delivery drone, and Pizza Hut reckon you could fill it up with chefs and ovens and dispatch it to wherever there's a party packed with peckish students.

Uber reckon it'll take off because you can pack it with people (and not have to pay a driver to take them anywhere), and if you stretch the wheelbase it can even perform the sort of work long-distance lorry drivers are paid to do.

But whether I sign up as a fan depends entirely on whether it can be fitted with a towbar, should it ever make production.

Toyota has touted the idea of the e-Pallette being used as a hotel room on wheels too, but I'd be much more interested in sticking my MGB GT on a trailer, hitching it to the back and then using it as a sort of autonomous motorhome that transports me and my wheels on petrolhead holidays.

I'd love the idea of taking my pride and joy to, say, the Scottish Highlands without having to spend the first day of my holiday resting because driving up there in a 45-year-old sports car is so tiring. Or opening the door of my autonomously-driven luxury suite to discover I'm in the Alps or some sun-drenched bit of Spain or Italy.

I love driving, but I'm sure even the most ardent petrolhead would happily let a machine take care of the M6 on a congested Friday night.

Toyota might actually be onto something with a car that's a glorified box on wheels. The challenge now is to make sure we're still allowed to drive all those wonderful cars that aren't.

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47 Monthly Payments	£239.00	**APR Representative**	4.2%

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04	**FORD** FIESTA 5DR, light blue	£1295
03	**VW** POLO 1.2S 3DR, blue	£1295
55	**SUZUKI** ALTO 1.1 5DR, blue, 70,000 miles	£1295
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07	**RENAULT** CLIO CAMPUS 1.1 3DR, black	£1250
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P	**BMW** 318SE SALOON 4DR, blue	£995
51	**RENAULT** CLIO 1.2 3DR, burgundy	£995
55	**FIAT** PUNTO 1.2 5DR, black	£995
52	**FORD** KA, in silver, full mot, complete new clutch, only 42,000 miles	£995
52	**HONDA** JAZZ, silver, low mileage	£995
04	**VAUXHALL** CORSA LIFE 1.2, in silver, 61,000 miles	£995
P	**VAUXHALL** ASTRA 1.6 PREMIER 5DR, red	£500
51	**FORD** FIESTA 1.2 3DR, red	£500
W	**RENAULT** CLIO 1.2 3DR, blue	£500

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Linnets beaten by controversial goal

Irlam 2
Burscough 1

BURSCOUGH were beaten by a controversial late goal in injury time to leave Irlam empty handed, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow*.

Despite dominating the early exchanges and taking a 16th minute lead, Burscough slipped to defeat at Silver Street on Saturday.

Burscough weren't just the best team for the opening half hour they were dominant from the off.

When Burscough took the lead on 16 minutes it was a surprise to no one. Cummings was the architect, storming past a home defender before crossing into the goalmouth. Hodkinson's shot was saved by keeper White, but the ball ran to Chad Whyte who made not mistake from about four yards.

On 31 minutes substitute Illidge turned the game on its head. Latching onto a loose ball some 25 yards from goal he turned and struck a vicious right-foot shot that went straight into the top corner of the net. It was a stunner and completely against the run of play to make it 1-1.

12 minutes from time, Burscough had a loud and justifiable penalty appeal turned away after a foul on Whyte after Brady's free-kick.

Irlam scored the winner in the third minute of added time and just to make it doubly frustrating, it was controversial.

Rex Kimona-Puissance clashed midway between the penalty area and halfway line and went down holding his head, Burscough briefly stopped but the ball ran to Jordan Icely who ran at goal.

As he was closed down he squared the ball and Connor Martin tapped the ball home from close range. It was around a minute and a half before the game kicked off again, such were Burscough's protests.

Skem pay for slow start

Skelmersdale United 1
Tadcaster Albion 3

SKELMERSDALE were made to pay for a slow start after failing to recover from conceding two goals in the opening half hour, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow.*

Wardle scores the Skem goal. Picture by John Driscoll

Their hopes of building on last week's point at Ramsbottom were dealt a double blow in the first half against Tadcaster Albion at Volair Park, Prescot, when the Yorkshiremen went into a 2-0 lead inside the opening 32 minutes.

Although Skelmersdale recovered to pull a goal back before the interval, they found an equaliser too much.

Both teams had opportunities early on with Tadcaster probably having marginally more, the highlights for Skem seeing a half volley from Jordan Darr getting no telling touch in the Tadcaster goalmouth.

For the visitors a Fraser Paprill header went over the top and a weak shot from Joe Pugh that was dealt with by Skem goalkeeper Lee Callum Roberts.

It was a loose pass and a surging run that brought about Tadcaster's opening goal on 20 minutes.

Having received the ball from keeper Roberts, Skem left-back Jack Fleming attempted a square ball that was pounced upon by Pete Davidson. The midfielder ran straight at the Skem defence beating one man before shooting into the net from 15 yards.

In the 25th minute Conor Sellars spun clear of his Skelmersdale marker but was thwarted by a superb tackle from Mike Roddy. Then four minutes later Casey Stewart got clear but shot past Roberts far post.

Skelmersdale were living dangerously, though when they did concede the second goal on 32 minutes they had a right to complain.

Tadcaster scored off a free-kick from the left that went in via the head of Andrew Milne after he lost his marker. There was no problem with that, but the awarding of the free-kick was very different. Pursuing the ball alongside Skem's Phil Mooney, Aiden Savory stopped dead; leaving Mooney no choice other than to run into the Tadcaster forward.

Right on half-time Skelmersdale won a corner on the right and as is customary Fleming sent it to the far side of the six yard box.

It was headed down and Tom Mitchell attempted a shot but fell to the ground and after another attempt, Mitchell laid the ball off to Josh Wardle who fired home from six yards to put Skelmersdale back into the game.

Wardle's goal lifted Skelmersdale and they set about Tadcaster after the break. Soon Darr cleverly slipped away from his marker and sent the ball low right across the face of goal, but no one could supply the crucial finish.

Skelmersdale pressed but were unable to create a big impact despite having more of the possession.

Tadcaster effectively finished off the game on 75 minutes on a breakaway. Savory made a run down the left and put the ball into the path of Pugh who swept the ball into the Skelmersdale net from 20 yards.

Powell in no rush for new striker

SKELMERSDALE manager Dave Powell says he won't be pressured into panic buying a new striker after revealing he is prepared to wait for the right man.

The search for a new forward isn't a new story at Skelmersdale and Powell is looking for a replacement to Andy Owens after he left to join Welsh Premier side Connah's Quay.

He said: "We need the right sort of person as well as the right footballer, discussions are ongoing. I have my heart set on exactly the sort of player I am looking for.

"I have spoken to the lads we have and told them to pick up the shirt and run with it."

Skelmersdale are away at Mossley this Saturday, then away to Ossett Town on Tuesday, January 23.

Burscough are at home to Ashton Athletic on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the Linnets have been drawn at home to Prestwich Heys in the Macron Cup, the tie to be played sometime in March.

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★FREE Fitting & Dressing of made to measure curtains
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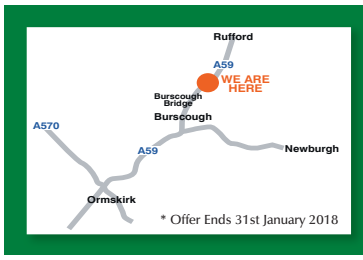

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Metalfloor UK Ltd

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"Having employed the services of FFB for over two years now, I can confidently say that the PA / Call Handling service provided has become an essential and integral extension to our busy office-based sales team function. The PA's dedicated to our company have proved to be extremely efficient, professional and polite at all times and represent our company exactly as we require. Face for Business provide us with peace of mind, enabling us to focus on the day to day business without the worry of missing valuable new business calls - and all at a fraction of the cost of employing additional staff. A truly outstanding business tool which we would not be without - "Well done all at face for Business!"

Benefits unique to Face for Business:

- Free call recording
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We answer calls on behalf of 100s of UK businesses and we could be helping you, too!

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NRE Surveyors

"The nature of our job, means that we are out of the office regularly and often miss important phone calls from prospective clients. A strand of our service is commercial estate agency and we have numerous enquiries for properties on a daily basis. Quite often, whilst out on a viewing, we have been unable to answer calls, and on occasion this has led to missed opportunities.

However, we began using Face for Business a few months ago, and I'm delighted to say that not one call has been missed. When we are on a viewing or valuation, we divert our calls to Face for Business, and they take messages for us. The joy of this system is that messages are emailed directly to our phones, and we are able to assess the urgency of the call whilst we are away from the office.

The other benefit is that we also have the option to have our calls transferred back to us. So, if we are expecting an important call, we inform the PA at Face for Business and she will transfer it to us. Face for Business has improved our daily working practices, and we find them to be a professional and helpful service, with the PA's being extremely knowledgeable and fluent in the service they offer."

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